

Standards Process Group Meeting Notes
Jan 8, 2004
Orlando, Florida

Attendees :

Rich Ullman	NASA/GSFC/SEEDS
Yonsook Enloe	SGT Inc.
Jingli Yang	ERT Inc.
Ming-Hsiang Tsou	San Diego State University
Stan Morain	U. New Mexico/EDAC
Tom Yunck	JPL/Genesis REASON
Chris Lenhardt	SEDAC/CIESIN/REASoN
Larry Sugarbaker	NatureServe
Sam Bacharach	KLC/OGC
Helen Conover	UAH
Silvia Nittel	U. Maine
Brent Gilmore	UCSD/JPL
David Giles	SSAI/NASA GSFC/BAMGOMAS
Gi-Kong Kim	NASA/GSFC
Siri Jodha S. Khalsa	NSIDC/Univ. Colorado
Ananth Rao	SGT, Inc.
Glenn Cunningham	JPL/REASoN
Ken McDonald	NASA/GSFC/SEEDS
Martha Maiden	NASA HQ
Nancy Casey	NASA/GSFC/REASoN
Watson Gregg	NASA/GSFC/REASoN
John Evans	GIO/GST, Inc.
Allan Doyle	International Interfaces

SPG website :

<http://eos.nasa.gov/seeds/SPG>

SPG email list :

spg@killians.gsfc.nasa.gov

Rich Ullman's overview & introduction to the Standards Process

http://eos.nasa.gov/seeds/SPG/minutes/080104_Orlando/index.html

Decisions :

- Ming Hsiang Tsou, San Diego State University, was elected co-chair of the SPG by unanimous vote.

- SPG work will be done using email, SPG website, monthly telecons, and 2 face to face meetings per year
- The monthly SPG telecons will take place on the third Wednesday of the month at 2pm ET. The first SPG telecon is scheduled for Wed Jan 21 at 2pm ET.
- A survey question, asking stakeholders what two interfaces or capabilities they would like to see standardized that would help them the most, will be crafted and then sent to the stakeholders.
- Send invites to future SPG meetings to prominent sister organizations that should have reps to the SPG (FGDC, NOAA (Steve Hankin?), NOAA CLASS, NSF Earth Science Division, etc.)
- SPG needs to build a public announcement list to review RFCs. We need to identify points of contact for ESIPs, DAACs, mission systems, measurement systems, SIPs, modeling, analysis, education, science, applications, external organizations, etc. Will use the OGC public announcement list for part of this.
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Notable Points/Issues :

- Membership of the SPG : nominated by stakeholder organizations. ESE management has final say on who is eligible.
- We need to identify particularly prominent sister organizations that should have reps to the SPG and send invites to future meetings. We need to have more interaction with NOAA, particularly since they will be the operations arm.
- SPG adopting standards for use by ESE data systems.
- What are the boundaries for ESE data systems? What's considered in? out? Any system that NASA partially funds? E.g. NASA sends money to NOAA to pipe their data into EOSDIS. NASA could specify that the NOAA data comes in standard formats using standard interfaces
- Public comments on RFCs should go out to wider audiences. OGC has a public comment announcement list that SPC can send announcements of RFCs that need to be reviewed. We also need to publish on the Federal Register. SPG needs to build a public announcement list.
- What representation from ESE stakeholders is missing? (science, education, application, DAACs, SIPs, mission systems, measurement systems, modeling, analysis, industry ...) Mission systems missing from SPG. There is one ocean color measurement REASON. Is that enough to represent a measurement system? We may just need to represent all the stakeholders in the public announcement list but not necessarily have reps from each sector in the SPG.
- Are there any areas where lack of standards is impeding progress by a REASON site? If so, we need to identify those areas. Can we send out a one question survey to find out these areas?
- Need to evangelize to the community to get their ideas on what needs to get standardized. Do we need brochure for this? One on one conversations by SPG members would be good.

- One on one dialogue with FGDC standards group, discussing their lessons learned will be very helpful. FGDC made a lot of mistakes early on with their standards process. However, they learned and made adjustments and then became much more effective the last couple of years.

Potential areas to standardize :

- WCS
- OGC Service Registry
- GCMD
- Metadata content
- File format
- Web based security for data transfer from data provider to user site (homeland security REASoN needs this, e.g. public key/private key, certificates, data encryption,...) The web based security could be more of a Best Practices type document than an interface standard
- Content classification for vegetation community (no encoding needed – physical file format is not the problem) – to make reformatting into standard classification easier – this is already supposed to be mandated across federal data but not enough conformance (National Vegetation Classification system)
- Precipitation Content Standard (talk to precipitation science teams about this)
- Catalog systems (directory and/or inventory) – what are the differences among the different catalog systems
- WMS

Discussion Excerpts :

Question : Want clarification that SEEDS is not an EOSDIS followon -- not a system, but a management and change process

Answer : correct

Question : Concerns about specifying internal standards or going into excessive detail - e.g. specifying programming language or telling me whether I can use a Mac or PC.

Answer : Scope of SPG is standards or ESE data systems, standards at the interfaces or standards for capabilities. We also need to encourage communities to document their internal standards to support openness.

Question : I'm not sure what problem this is trying to solve that's unique to NASA.

Answer : Other orgs may well share these problems. However, this process seeks to formulate specific ESE positions on solutions. We would expect that more and more the community would forward proposals, rather than SPG going out looking for areas to standardize.

Question : I'm concerned that this is overly loose and unmanaged., much too far away from the highly planned ECS approach.

Answer : we are looking toward directed evolution, but want to make choices among viable options rather than always developing everything new. SPG may in fact be more reactive than ESE management. Project management has local control to develop appropriate solutions, but SPG will identify good solutions as potential standards. SPG will not be developing new technologies.

Comment : SPG may in fact be fairly reactive in responding to proposals; NASA ESE management would have the more proactive role.

Comment: One proactive role of the SPG would be to search for practices in use within particular communities and promote them for wider use.

Question: What is rough consensus?

Answer : as determined by chair and co-chair

Suggestion for way forward : what about looking for existing problem areas, interfaces where groups are looking for standards? Evangelize process first. Also develop process for identifying problem areas. Creating a standard for its own sake is dangerous and expensive.

Comment : or could do engineering analysis of overall architecture for areas that could benefit.

Comment : real issue is plethora of standards. Consensus, community building, and socialization (process) more important than the actual list of standards

Comment : look to UCGIS (University Consortium of GIS) model. Ask reach REASoN organization and other working groups to suggest two standards or areas of standardization. Look for common suggestions.

Question : technology can change faster than standards process. How to keep up with new versions of adopted standards?

Answer : short-circuit review cycle for updates

Question: What about tech support? May be needed to help folk implement

Answer : Yes – that is true. There are funding issues with this and we need to pursue this.